

RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL CEMETERIES ADVISORY COMMISSION

Minutes of 19 November 2008

Commissioners in attendance: Evelyn Wheeler, Margaret Malcolm, Judith Fardig, Sally Small, Edna M. Kent, Henry Duquette, Lee Teverow, Bruce MacGunnigle, Robert S. Butler, Paul A. Robinson, Carolyn Crist-Schwab.

Chairwoman Evelyn Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

Minutes

Lee Teverow said Goal 1 on development of the Commission's Web site should be amended to include wording that work continue on the cemetery database linked to the site. The wording is needed to ensure the base is considered the principal, up-to-date location for Rhode Island cemetery data. A motion to accept the minutes as amended was made by Bruce MacGunnigle, with a second by Edna Kent. The motion passed unanimously.

Member reports

Chairwoman Wheeler reported that the Secretary of State has accepted the Commission's Rules and Regulations (32-18-3.1) and will make them available on the Secretary of State's Web site.

Chairwoman Wheeler announced the Commission's next meeting will

be held April 15 at 6:45 p.m. in the Warren Senior Center, Kickemuit Village housing for the elderly, 20 Libby Lane, Warren.

Chairwoman Wheeler reported she was contacted by the Johnston Historical Society over plans by the developer of a Walgreen's drug store to build the store up to the wall of an adjacent historical cemetery. Wheeler reported that the Town of Johnston has issued a cease and desist order at the site on Cherry Hill Lane off Atwood Avenue. After much discussion over the role the Chairwoman should play in the controversy, the Commission suggested the Chairwoman act only in an advisory capacity to Johnston officials.

Chairwoman Wheeler reported she has received several calls from people concerned about perpetual care not being given to grave sites. Bruce MacGunnigle reported there are sections of State Law (23-18-8.3 and 23.18.9) that deal with how perpetual care money is to be use, how it must be kept in a separate account from other cemetery monies, and how it is to be invested.

Chairwoman Wheeler reported she met with her State Representative on re-introducing in January those rules and regulations of the Commission that have not yet passed the General Assembly. She said those include more members from Providence County, and to have a Commission quorum consist of 50 percent of members plus 1.

Paul Robinson reported he had been contacted by Doug Harris, the deputy historian of the Narragansett Indian Tribe, wanting to know if the Commission knew anything about an Indian burial mound having been located on Willow Avenue in Narragansett. Chairwoman Wheeler, who lives in Narragansett, said she would “talk to some of the old-timers in town.”

Margaret Malcolm moved and Robert Butler seconded a motion that Chairwoman Wheeler provide Commission members with a monthly newsletter on her activities, along with issues she knew of that might impact the Commission. The motion passed unanimously.

Lee Teverow reported that she is trying to make the data base more accessible and still trying to get an updated version of the database.

Edna Kent reported that two test holes were dug next to the mounds in Gloucester and they turned up only charcoal and stones.

Chairwoman Wheeler reported that volunteers are still documenting Locust Grove Cemetery in Providence. There is more to do and

volunteers are needed.

Sally Small reported that the Daughters of the American Revolution was trying to locate the graves of 760 “real” Rhode Island daughters of the Revolution -- those who were the daughters of fathers who fought in the Revolutionary War. The DAR wants to re-set their stones and mark them. So far, 26 have been done.

Closing

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m. on a motion from Evelyn Wheeler and a second by Robert Butler.

After-Meeting Presentation

Kenneth Rahn Jr. gave an update of the Rhode Island Historical Cemeteries web site, and the Locust Grove Cemetery project. He also reported that descriptions of individual cemeteries should be added in the next week or so. They also want to add a comment section.

Sally Small had a question about a grave for Amey Evelyth buried in Locust Grove.

She was given the correct lot number.